

# Northwoods Journal – September 2010

*A Free Publication About Enjoying and Protecting Marinette County’s Outdoor Life*

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## ***PESHTIGO RIVER TRAIL PADDLE TRIP***

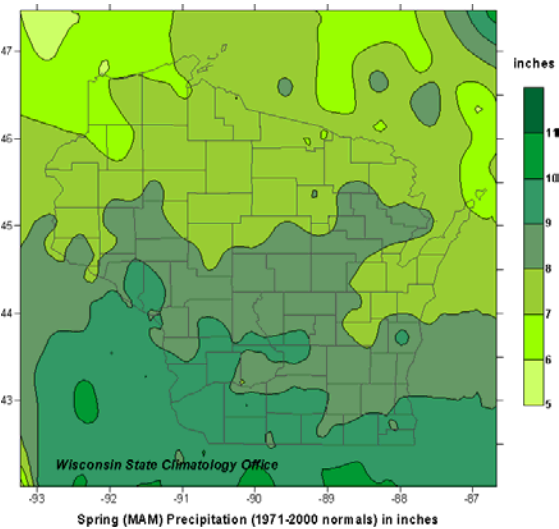
*Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.*

Come enjoy a leisurely paddle down the Lower Peshtigo River from the City of Peshtigo boat landing to the County Rd. BB boat landing. Bring your own canoe/kayak or use one of our canoes (limited supply of 6 canoes). There will be a few kayaks available also, courtesy of Bill St. Martin of the Cycle Path in Menominee, MI. *Canoe/Kayak reservations start August 30 at 9 a.m.* Youth under 18 must be accompanied by an adult, and you must provide your own snacks, water, etc. To register, reserve a canoe/kayak, or for more information about the event, please call the Land & Water Conservation office at 715-732-7780.



## ***A Summer of Change for Marinette County Lakes***

You’ve probably heard the saying “if you don’t like the weather in Wisconsin, wait around a few minutes, it will change!” That has certainly been true this year – what started out with severe drought in the spring changed overnight into one of the wettest summers we have seen in years! This has made for some unusual conditions on many of our lakes and streams.



*Mean spring precipitation from 1971-2000, courtesy WI State Climatology Office.*

Here in Northeast Wisconsin as winter came to an end, we had one of the warmest spring seasons on record. In April and May, rivers that should have been raging with snowmelt and spring rains were at mid-summer lows. On the lakes, ice-out came early and the water warmed quickly, fueling rapid plant growth and spring algae blooms. All of that changed as summer arrived.

Since June, most of Northeast Wisconsin has received more than twice the normal amount of rainfall. While this may have put a damper on your outdoor activities, it is a welcome occurrence for our wetlands, lakes, and streams. Seepage lakes, which rise and fall with the groundwater table, have been especially hard hit by the drought. Most of these lakes have seen an improvement in water levels and a few have risen by a foot or more the last two months. While promising, this is just a start. It took years of drought and many seepage lakes are three to four feet low. It will likely take several wet years to recharge the water table and fill these lakes.

Drainage lakes and flowages, which are fed by streams, typically do not experience significant water level declines unless the incoming stream(s) dry up. However, the drought did lead to reduced flushing and, in many cases, improved water clarity. Combined with recent high temperatures, the result has been expanding weed growth - though summer rains brought much needed water, they also brought tannins in the runoff. Tannins are dissolved organic compounds that come from decompos-

ing plant material, and are abundant in wooded swamps. When washed into a lake, these compounds stain the water brown, so many tannin-stained lakes and flowages normally have water that looks like iced tea. In some lakes the increase in tannin was so dramatic this summer that visibility dropped by half or more in a few weeks’ time! Since colored water also absorbs more sunlight, surface water temperatures skyrocketed in these lakes.

The sudden drop in water clarity seen on tannin-stained lakes has resulted in changes in the aquatic plant community. In May, aquatic plants grew early in the warm, clear water. As long as the water remained clear many of these plants were content to stay near the bottom where they don’t cause a nuisance. However, by the end of June water clarity had decreased drastically, causing the plants to adapt or die. Many plants would reach for the surface then sprawl out to collect as much sunlight as possible. The increase in plant height and sprawling growth has been especially severe in Lake Noquebay.

According to Harvesting Foreman Dave Bendtschneider, weed growth is the worst they have seen in many years and the harvesters cannot keep up. On the other end of the spectrum, in Beecher Lake, tannin-stained water has lead to a decrease in plant abundance. In 2008 plants grew in water up to 11 feet deep. By August 2010, the lake was stained so dark you could not see the bottom in four feet of water! As a result, plants died back and nothing could be found growing beyond a depth of 7 feet.

So what’s in store for this fall? In lakes with a lot of plant dieback, the nutrients released from decaying plants may fuel some late-season algae blooms. If our hot weather continues into the fall these algae blooms will be even more severe and the odds increase that noxious blue-green algae will dominate.

Unfortunately, climatologists predict that what we are seeing this summer may be the new “normal”. The Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts predicts wetter winters with more of the precipitation coming as rain. They also anticipate hotter summers in northern Wisconsin. While the total annual rainfall is not predicted to change much, it is expected to be more concentrated as severe weather events become more frequent.

For more information on Wisconsin’s climate check out the Wisconsin State Climatology Office at <http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/>. The Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts can be found online at <http://www.wicci.wisc.edu/>.







## Meet Our Local Moles and Voles

By Greg Cleereman, Marinette County Conservationist

Our final article for 2010 focuses on two groups of small mammals: moles, which are insectivores like shrews; and voles, which are herbivorous rodents. The descriptively named Star-nosed Mole and Eastern Mole (which oddly enough is not generally found in eastern Wisconsin) are known for their digging prowess. Because only the Star-nosed Mole inhabits Marinette County, our mole story will focus on it.



Range of the Star-nosed Mole.

### Moles

Just about anyone who has seen a live Star-nosed Mole would have no doubt about its identity. The nose is the giveaway, with twenty or more fleshy pink projections (called 'nasal rays') in a circular pattern. Recent research suggests that the nasal rays contain sensitive organs called *Eimers organs* that detect the electrical fields around prey. These organs are very useful to a predator that does much of its hunting in total darkness. A Star-nosed Mole's eyes are quite small and probably are only useful for differentiating between light and dark.



Close up of the nasal rays. Note the large front feet for digging. Photo courtesy G.C. Hickman.

Adult Star-nosed Moles range in length from 6.9 to 8.1 inches and can weigh up to 2.6 ounces. Relative to its body size, the front feet are disproportionately large, with large claws for digging. Fur is dark gray to almost black. In the fall and early winter, the tail swells with fat up to four times its normal diameter - this stored energy helps the mole survive lean late winter months.

It is generally the Eastern Mole that gets the bad publicity for digging up lawns while foraging. Star-nosed Moles typically inhabit wet woodlands, moist fields, wetland, and riparian areas. They spend more time above ground than other mole species, in winter even burrowing up through snow. If their habitat contains open water, Star-nosed Moles feed heavily on aquatic worms and leeches, aquatic insect larvae, and even small fish. This underwater foraging even takes place beneath the ice in winter. They also possess the ability to smell underwater by exhaling air bubbles onto objects or scent trails



Moles are proficient swimmers and can easily find food underwater. Photo courtesy G.C. Hickman.

and then inhaling the bubbles to carry scent back through the nose. If they are confined to a terrestrial habitat, Star-nosed Moles feed heavily on earthworms and to a much lesser extent on adult and larval terrestrial insects. However, their reputation for digging is not misplaced - Star-nosed Moles can dig up to 18 feet of tunnel per hour and 100 feet of tunnel in a day!

Like other moles, Star-nosed Moles dig shallow summer burrows and deeper winter burrows. Often they dig tunnels that exit under water to avoid predators. Their summer den is a leaf and dead grass-lined chamber under a log; in winter the tunnel continues below the frost line. Three to seven young are born in separate burrow chambers in April or May, and generally there is only one litter per year. Young moles are born naked and helpless with the "star" nose enclosed in a thin membrane. At birth the eye is only a black dot. The young grow rapidly and leave their mothers in about four weeks.

Not much is known about the maximum or average lifespan of Star-nosed Moles in the wild. However, they have many predators including owls, dogs, cats, foxes, weasels, large fish, and even bull frogs - so surviving even two years in the wild is not a certainty.

### Voles

Two of Wisconsin's four vole species call Marinette County home. Voles in general have shorter, rounder snouts and shorter tails than mice. Also, unlike mice voles seldom enter houses. The digestive tracts of all voles contain a large pouch called a *cecum*. The cecum contains microscopic bacteria (called microflora) that help break down the tough cellulose found in the plants that make up the majority of their diet. Neither of our voles hibernates in winter or caches food for use in lean times, resulting in a sharp decrease in winter populations from predation and starvation.

Southern Red-backed Voles inhabit coniferous forest, spruce bogs and wetlands across northern Wisconsin although there is significant overlap of habitats with Meadow Voles. They average 4.7 to 6.3" in length with a 1.2 to 2" tail.



A Red-backed Vole feeding. Photo from [voles.com](http://voles.com).

Continued on page 5

## Celebrate Salsa at Harmony Arboretum's Salsa Night!

The popular 'Salsa Night' is coming back to the Harmony Arboretum! UW-Extension of Marinette County and the Northern Lights Master Gardeners' Association invites all gardeners and salsa enthusiasts to the Harmony Arboretum & Demonstration Gardens on Thursday, September 9th. Starting at 6 pm, participants will have the opportunity to learn the ins-and-outs of salsa-making, safe salsa preservation, and the growing of your own salsa ingredients.



UW-Extension Family Living Educator Nancy Crevier will be leading a discussion and demonstration of safely preserving your salsa. Questions regarding how to grow fresh herbs to season your salsa will be answered by UWEX Horticulture Assistant Linda Warren and other Master Gardeners. The production of and pest management on tomatoes, peppers, onions, and garlic will be the focus of a discussion led by UWEX Horticulture Agent Scott Reuss. Reuss particularly invites all attendees to bring any pest or problem samples that your produce is experiencing this year, so that you can get the problem diagnosed and form a management strategy for next year.

There will be a few other surprises throughout the evening, as well as some great salsa sampling. There is no entrance fee for attending the program, but we are asking attendees to bring chips or crackers for the salsa sampling (this will keep costs to a minimum).



The Harmony Arboretum & Demonstration Gardens are located on Marinette County Road E, ½ mile south of Hwy. 64. All persons are welcome to attend this free event. If you have any questions, please contact Scott or Linda at the UW-Extension office, 715-732-7510 or toll-free at 1-877-884-4408 or e-mail to [scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu). A schedule of the other nature and horticultural events which will take place during 2010 can be found at [www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/marinette/](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/marinette/) under the horticulture link, along with lots of other horticultural information.

## Northwoods Journal Online

Would you like to read current issues of the *Northwoods Journal* online? Go to [www.marinettecounty.com](http://www.marinettecounty.com) and click on the link at the bottom of the page. We can even send you an e-mail reminder when each new issue is posted on our website. Please contact Anne Warren, Information & Education Specialist, at [awarren@marinettecounty.com](mailto:awarren@marinettecounty.com) or call 715-732-7784 for more information.





## County Landfill & Area Recycling Information

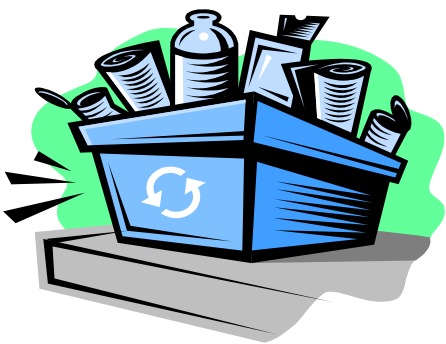
MAR-OCO County Landfill  
(Marinette and Oconto Counties)  
N7785 Shaffer Road, 5 miles west of Crivitz  
off of County Rd. A  
(715) 854-7530

### 2010 Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays, April – October  
8 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Closed all other Saturdays, Sundays &  
holidays

***Yard waste, liquid waste, automobile parts, & recyclables are not accepted. Disposal fees apply.***

For more information, visit online at  
[www.marinettecounty.com](http://www.marinettecounty.com)



### Recycling Centers

**Town of Stephenson**  
Twin Bridge site, County X  
Tuesday, Saturday, Sunday  
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Crivitz site, August Street  
Wednesday and Saturday  
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Newspaper, cardboard, magazines, glass bottles and jars, tin cans, aluminum, plastic containers (1 & 2), used motor oil, car batteries, scrap metal & yard waste accepted. For more information visit online at  
<http://www.stephensonwisc.com/>.

**Town of Peshtigo**  
W1945 Old Peshtigo Road  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays each month  
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays each month  
12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

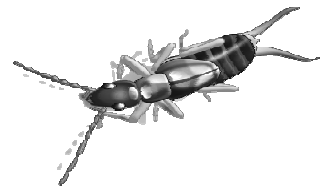
We accept tires, appliances and air conditioners with Freon, stoves, microwaves, washers, dryers, any kind of metal (no motor vehicles), televisions, automotive oil (no cooking oil or antifreeze), paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, aluminum, tin, batteries, bagged garbage and yard waste. No paint or hazardous materials. Some fees may apply. Visit  
<http://townofpeshtigo.org> for more information. Residents only.

**Township of Athelstane**  
(715) 856-6428  
Wednesday, 12:00 – 4p.m.  
Saturday, 12:00 – 4p.m.  
Sunday, 8a.m. – 4p.m.

Cans, cardboard, brown & clear glass, magazines, paper, plastic #1 & #2, and drain oil accepted; no building materials or paint. Some yard waste accepted. Fees may apply. For more information visit:  
<http://athelstanewi.com/recycle.htm>.

## Plant Pest Alert: Earwigs!

By: Scott Reuss, Marinette County UW-Extension



Although not really new to our area, earwigs are constantly expanding their territory and are being found in damaging populations for the first time by many gardeners this year. The species of earwig found here (European Earwig) is an import (i.e. an invasive species) which was first found in the U.S. in Rhode Island at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the Marinette County area, they first showed up along Green Bay and along the Menominee River and have been spreading significantly in recent years. They are now found throughout Marinette, Oconto, and Florence Counties.



The name earwig, which literally means “ear creature,” originated from the widespread superstition that these insects crawl into the ears of sleeping people. Many individuals believed that once an earwig gained access into the human ear, it could bore into the brain. Actually, these insects do not crawl into the human ear ([ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/earwigs](http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/earwigs)).

**Biology:** Earwigs are very easy to accurately identify, as they are the only insect found in our area that has ‘pincers’ prominently placed on the rear of the abdomen. These appendages are more accurately called *cerci* and are used for defense, capturing prey, and sensing the environment. Yes, they can pinch fingers, but only enough to make you feel it, as they are not strong enough to break human skin.

Earwigs are omnivores, eating small insects and insect eggs, as well as feeding on plant leaves, flower petals, mosses, lichens, and algae. In general, they are only active at night and will usually hide in dark, somewhat confined spaces (preferably moist, as well) during the day.

Earwigs have one trait that is rare in the insect world - they care for their eggs and young. Females turn, lick, and reposition their eggs and then feed and protect the nymphs until they are large enough to survive on their own.

Adult insects overwinter as pairs, digging into the soil a few inches and hibernating. The female lays 25-30 eggs in late winter or early spring. As soil warms, the males leave the hibernation sites first, followed by the females in late May or early June.

**Problems Caused:** Earwigs and slugs cause relatively similar damage, although individual earwig feeding holes are often smaller. If there are many earwigs around, they can cause heavier damage in the intermediate and long-term as the



Leaf damage by earwigs. Photo courtesy of Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org.

small holes become bigger groups of holes and/or loss of leaf material, flower petals, and other plant parts.

On the more unusual side of ‘damage’ attributed to earwigs is well contamination. This occurs when earwigs find loose-fitting well caps to hide under during the day, as these dark, damp places are what they search for as hiding spots. If any fall into the water, they deteriorate and cause bacterial contamination. This is easily prevented by making sure you have a vermin-proof, properly fitted well cap.

Earwigs found indoors can be nuisances, but are generally not doing anything other than hiding. They will not nest indoors nor hibernate.

**Control:** Potential control options include environmental manipulation, trapping, and insecticide usage. Manipulating the environment to decrease earwig hiding places involves drying the environment out by decreasing the amount of mulch used, destroying moss and algae growth, having plants that are not low growing, and using proper watering techniques.

To prevent them from getting indoors, using caulking or similar methods to close up entry points, or create a dry barrier zone around the foundation, especially at windows and frames.

Trapping can be done in many different ways, and will often trap slugs at the same time. Placing boards around plants or between plant rows and then lifting them up during the day and crushing any hiding slugs & earwigs can be fairly effective. Earwigs can be trapped in tuna or cat food cans baited with fish or vegetable oil or in rolled up newspapers and then shaking live insects into a pail of soapy water or crushing them.

Chemical control is best done either as a barrier treatment or as direct treatments to daytime hiding places. Insecticidal soaps can be effective if sprayed directly onto the insects, but will not work in any other manner. Many different insecticide active ingredients can be used effectively against them, including *carbaryl*, *acephate*, *bifenthrin*, *permethrin*, *cyfluthrin*, and *esfenvalerate*. The problem is often that you need to use relatively heavy application rates to effectively treat the mulch or bed areas in which they are hiding. It may be better to use a granular formulation and then water it in separately, rather than a liquid formulation. As always, if you decide to use an insecticide, make certain to read and follow the label completely.

If you have questions about earwigs, other plant feeding insects, or any other horticultural question, contact Scott Reuss or Linda Warren at the Marinette County UW-Extension office, 715-732-7510, or e-mail Scott at [scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu).

### More information can be found at:

- <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/earwigs> - Penn State University College of Agriculture
- <http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/hortnews/1997/7-11-1997/earwigs.html> - Iowa State University
- [http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/diaglab/06highlight/06\\_06.html](http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/diaglab/06highlight/06_06.html) - UW-Madison Entomology Department





## Invasive Species Educational Event

Marinette, WI – The Marinette County Land and Water Conservation Division along with the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC) will hold an invasive species education and citizen monitoring event on September 1<sup>st</sup> at the UW Marinette field house (room F108) from 6-8 pm. For more about WRISC, see the article on page 6.



The purpose of the workshop is to enlist the public's support in combating both land and water invasive species, and to train people how to identify and map a selected group of harmful species. Learn about the "most UN-wanted" invasives and how you can take an active role in mapping and responding to infestations in our area.

Whether you're a hiker, biker, boater, or landowner, you will find this workshop enlightening as you learn to look more closely at how these invasive species impact the nature of our area. Even if you can't contribute an active role, feel free to come and learn about this topic--families and youth groups are welcome. The September 1<sup>st</sup> workshop is free and open to anyone. Reservations are appreciated. For more information, call or email Robert Ruleau at (715) 732-7642 or [rruleau@marinettecounty.com](mailto:rruleau@marinettecounty.com).

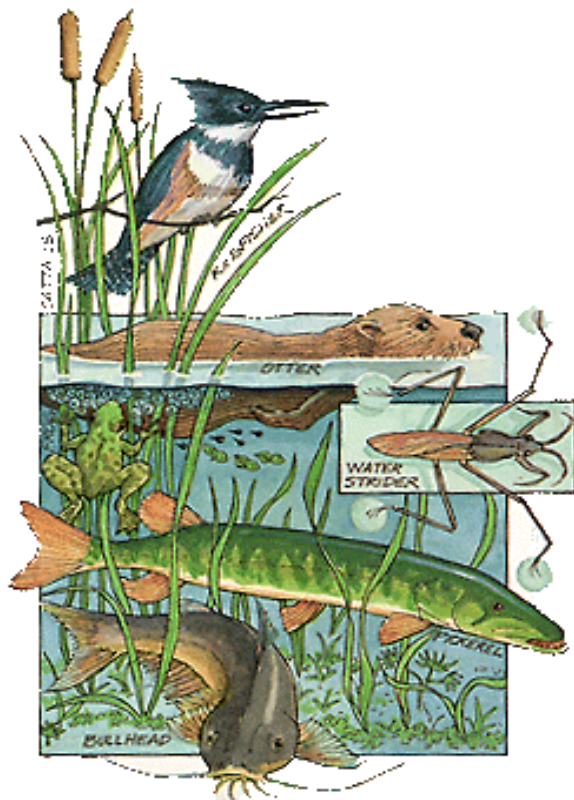
For more information about invasive species in Wisconsin and their effects on native species, prevention and education efforts, control methods, etc., please visit the following websites:

- <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/> - WDNR
- <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/BCW/default.asp> - Clean Boats, Clean Waters program (UW-Extension)
- <http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/invasive/> - Environmental Protection Agency
- <http://www.seagrant.wisc.edu/> - University of Wisconsin Sea Grant
- <http://greatlakesrestoration.us/> - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
- <http://www.protectyourwaters.net/> - preventing aquatic hitchhikers



## 2010 Environmental Awareness Poster Contest

Every fall the Marinette County LWCD, with the Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association, sponsors the Environmental Poster Contest for school-aged children in Wisconsin. Subject matter is of an environmental awareness topic or about conservation of natural resources such as soil conservation, water quality, air, wildlife, and forestry as related to Marinette County or Wisconsin. **Poster participants are encouraged to use the Soil Stewardship theme of "Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats".**



### Theme Information

Each of us can be good stewards of our natural resources at our home and in our communities. When we think about protecting and managing our natural resources, we can provide healthy habitats for the ecosystems on our planet. Each of us can make a difference by starting in our own backyard, our school or in our community.

What is **conservation**? *Conservation is careful management of the environment and our natural resources.* A habit is something we do without thinking about it. Some habits are not good, like throwing litter out of a car window. Some habits are good, like recycling. Develop conservation habits so that it becomes second nature.

What is **habitat**? *A habitat is the place where something lives because it is adapted to find food, water, shelter, and space.* People, plants

Wherever you are, you are in a habitat. Habitats are all over, you can find them in forests, grasslands, deserts, wetlands, arctic tundra as well as right outside your backdoor!

First place winners of the county contest will be entered in the Lake Michigan Area Land & Water Conservation (LMLWCA) Area Contest in October 2010. The first place winners in the area contest will be entered in the Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WLWCA) State Contest in November 2010. The first place winners of the state contest, who qualify by using the Stewardship Theme, will be entered in the National Association of Conservation Districts contest. If you want to be entered into the national contest, **you must use the Stewardship theme.** Prizes will be awarded to the first three places in each division in the contest at the county, area and state level.

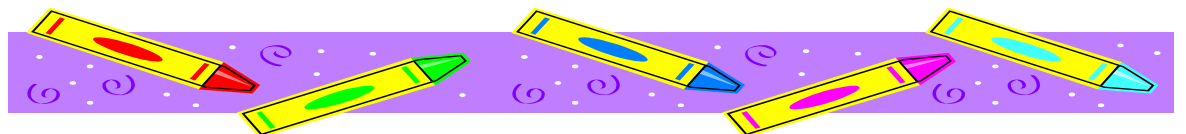
### Contest Divisions are:

- Primary - Students in Grades K-1 during the school year
- Elementary - Students in Grades 2-3 during the school year
- Middle - Students in Grades 4-6 during the school year
- Junior - Students in Grades 7-9 during the school year
- Senior - Students in Grades 10-12 during the school year.

Posters must be returned to the Land Information Department – 1926 Hall Avenue – Marinette WI 54143-1717 by Friday, October 8, 2010. **Posters must have an entry blank attached to the back of the poster to be eligible for area and state contests.** For an entry blank and a copy of the rules, please call Aleta DiRienzo at (715) 732-7780 or visit the Marinette County website at [www.marinettecounty.com](http://www.marinettecounty.com).

**Please visit the following website to learn more about *Conservation habits = Conservation Habitat.***

<http://www.nacdnet.org/education/contests/poster/#2010>



## Astronomy at the Arboretum in October!

Have you ever wanted to know more about the night sky? Anne Warren of Marinette County Land & Water Conservation Division will give a stargazing tour of the fall night sky and share general astronomy information from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at the Harmony Arboretum, located 7 miles west of Marinette, ½ mile south of State Highway 64 on County Road E. This is a free public program. Learn more about constellations, look for satellites and meteors, make a star chart, and enjoy an evening under the stars! Some viewing equipment will be available but please feel free to bring your own. Dress for the weather, and hot beverages will be provided. If inclement weather, the event will be cancelled. For more information, please contact Anne Warren at [awarren@marinettecounty.com](mailto:awarren@marinettecounty.com) or call 715-732-7784.

Harmony Arboretum & Demonstration Gardens is a 460-acre county farm that has been developed into a conservation and horticulture education and demonstration area. The arboretum holds a majestic hardwood forest, winding walking trails, a restored prairie, and demonstration vegetable and flower gardens complete with a windmill for water. It is always open to the public free of charge.





### *Moles & Voles, Continued from page 2*

Their fur is rusty red on the back with lighter brown sides. Black belly fur has white tips, making it look silvery. The reddish back fur is usually quite obvious.



*Range of the Southern Red-backed Vole.*

Although less common than Meadow Voles, the average person is more likely to have seen a Southern Red-backed Vole due to better visibility in its wooded habitat. They are active any time night or day, but when above ground they stay close to fallen trees or rocks. Red-backed Voles most frequently travel in tunnels made by other small mammals. This vole is a good climber and will forage and sometimes even nest in trees. It keeps a home nest, often under a fallen log, made of grasses, twigs, and moss. The home range is typically around 1.2 acres and is defended from other Red-backed Voles and other small mammal species as well.

Southern Red-backed Voles change their diet with the season. They focus on leaf petioles and young shoots in the spring and move on to fruits and berries in the summer. During warm months, this vole feeds on an underground fungus called *Endogone* as well. In the fall the focus changes to nuts and seeds. Caching of food is not a behavior of this vole, forcing it to actively forage seeds and nuts under the snow. When needed, the diet is also supplemented with roots and even tree bark. Throughout the year insects are part of the diet, but not nearly to the extent seen in mice.

Their breeding season starts in late winter. Four to five young are born after an eighteen-day gestation period. Young grow quickly, increasing in size from .07 ounces at birth to 0.4 ounces by the time they are weaned at seventeen days, and two or three litters are born per year. Unlike other small mammals, the male stays with the family until the pups are weaned and on their own at three weeks of age.



*Vole young in nest. Photo from [voles.com](http://voles.com).*

Weather-related mortality is high for Red-backed Voles if cold weather comes before insulating snow. In the spring, melting snow floods their shallow tunnels and runways exposing them to greatly increased predation and harsh weather. Both hawks and owls feed on these voles. Weasels are a particular threat, although most mammalian predators eat them as well. Despite these threats, the average life span in the wild is 10-12 months.

Our other species, the Meadow Vole, inhabits wet grassy meadows and moist woodlands all across Wisconsin. They average 5.1 to 7.3" in

length with a 1.4 to 2.4" tail. Their fur is dark gray with rusty red highlights and peppered with black. Belly fur is gray. Their ears are quite small, but still visible. Meadow Voles are less red and have longer tails than Southern Red-backed Voles.



*A Meadow Vole. Photo courtesy Roger W. Barbour.*

Meadow Voles are most active at dawn and dusk, foraging in home ranges that average about 7/10 of an acre. They defend a core area round their nests that average about 16 square yards. Meadow Voles typically hide their nests under a clump of vegetation, or debris, or within a tunnel.



*Range of the Meadow Vole.*

During foraging, Meadow Voles create a labyrinth of runways through the grass. Once developed, the trails are maintained by cutting grass and piling it along the trail. Runways are about 1.5 inches wide and connect all the main activity areas such as feeding grounds, nest sites, and toilet areas. Meadow Voles are surrounded by food, since grasses and sedges are their preferred diet. Different portions of the plants are eaten depending on the season. In spring the sprouts are eaten; seeds and tips of the plants are eaten in summer and fall. Winter sees the voles focusing on basal portions and roots. During warm months, other herbaceous plants such as clover and dandelion become part of the diet. Voles are also known to eat a few insects, especially caterpillars.

A 21-day gestation period and post partum estrus (they breed again right after birth) put Meadow Voles among the most prolific mammals on earth. They average about eight litters of six pups each per year. In captivity, one female gave birth to seventeen litters of pups in one year. This high productivity is important because only about 10% of individuals live longer than a month - almost none live an entire year. Almost any terrestrial carnivores eat them, including unlikely hunters such as gulls, cranes, opossums, and even chipmunks. Meadow voles have huge population swings on a roughly four-year cycle, during which numbers can range from one Meadow Vole per acre up to 80 per acre. It is during these peaks of the cycle that the voles are forced to feed on bark, resulting in the girdling of young trees.

This article is based heavily on *Mammals of the Great Lakes* by Allen Kurta and *Mammals of Wisconsin* by Stan Tekiela.

## *Where in Marinette County?*

*Tell us where this photo was taken and you could win a prize!*

To enter, send a note including your name, address, and phone number or email [awarren@marinettecounty.com](mailto:awarren@marinettecounty.com). Any interesting facts about the subject are also welcome. Correct answers will be entered in a drawing for a tote bag of 'conservation goodies'.



Congratulations to Jacob Magee of Coleman for winning the drawing in August's "Where in Marinette County" contest! The picture below is of the old Badger Pulp Mill on the east side of the Peshtigo River in Peshtigo. It has recently been demolished and the property is being evaluated for future possible uses for the city.



Thanks to everyone participating in 2010, and good luck with this issue's photo. The winner of this issue's "Where in Marinette County?"

## *Information & Education Specialist Completes Certification*

Anne Warren, Information & Education Specialist for the Land & Water Conservation Division, recently completed a week-long training as a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association for Interpretation (NAI). NAI is a national organization that provides training and leadership for agencies and organizations that provide natural or cultural interpretation programming for the public. Examples include National Parks and Historic Monuments, cultural/heritage sites, museums, zoos/wildlife parks, and nature centers/programs.

The training covered many aspects of working with the public, including: improving public speaking skills, relating to audiences and their needs, planning program goals and objectives, and evaluating programs. For more information about NAI, visit their website at:

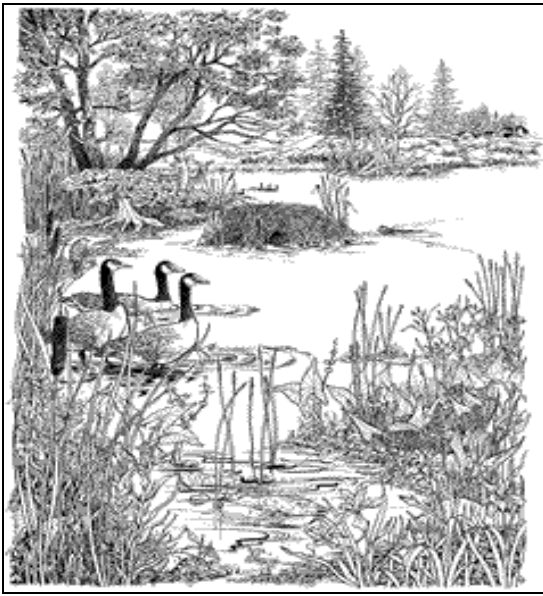
<http://www.interpnet.com>





## Marinette County Partners with the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC)

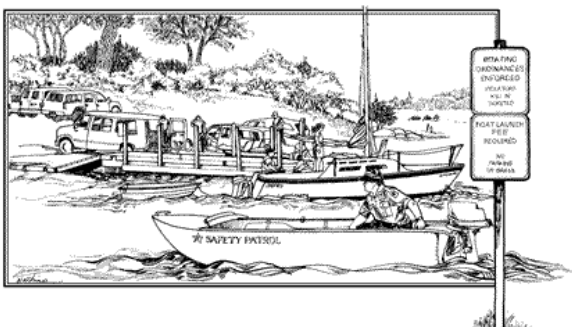
By Robert Ruleau, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator



Regional cooperative groups dedicated to managing invasive species are becoming ever more important, because these species do not distinguish between political boundaries like county and state lines when it comes to their spread across the landscape. A number of non-native plants and animals have caused a tremendous impact on resources in the Northwoods region. The abundance of lakes, rivers, wetlands, forests and open lands that define this geographical area are under constant threat from a variety of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species that do not belong here.

To combat the threat of current and future biological invaders, the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC) was formed this year to utilize resources and expertise from a number of stakeholders to manage and eradicate invasives. A cooperative partnership of federal, state and local government agencies, land managers, utility companies, civic organizations and individuals make up the weed management area of northeast Wisconsin and the southern region of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. WRISC is unique in that it is the first cooperative weed management area to cross state lines. The current management area includes the Wisconsin counties of Florence, Forest and Marinette, and Menominee and Dickinson counties in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Because of the ever increasing environmental and economic costs associated with infestations, proactive and collaborative efforts consisting of prevention and control are major priorities for WRISC. Public education and awareness are the most important elements in successfully preventing the spread and swiftly reacting to new infestations. Therefore, WRISC has utilized its resources and has distributed a wide variety of information and has held workshops and education sessions to get the public and communities involved in spreading awareness on the impacts of invasive species in the region. From youth groups to retired lake association members, getting the public on board with preventing invasives is priority number one and WRISC has the resources to do just that.



For established populations and new infestations, priority needs to go to different sites and species which may be causing the most impact to the economy and environment. Prioritized efforts to control invasives on land and water include a number of methods including: manual and mechanical, chemical, bio-control and cultural.



Before populations of invasives can be controlled, however, we must first know where they exist in the weed management area. WRISC partners will be working on a survey to map and document existing infestations so management can be prioritized and control efforts most effective.

During the summer of 2010, Marinette County Land and Water Conservation partnered with the WRISC to perform watercraft inspections at boat landings as part of the "Clean Boats Clean Waters" project, handed out educational materials at fishing tournaments and is hosting an educational and citizen monitoring workshop September 1<sup>st</sup> at UW-Marinette (see page 4 sidebar for more information). These collaborative partnerships will greatly help in promoting awareness and halting the spread of invasive species.



Come check out the WRISC invasive species display at the Marinette County Fair on Thursday and Friday, August 26 & 27<sup>th</sup> in Wausaukee. For more information, have a look at the WRISC website at <http://www.wrisc.org/> and learn about different harmful species and the efforts being put forth to manage them. Also learn how to become a partner in the fight against invasives threatening our Northwoods resources.

If you would like to learn more about preventing and controlling aquatic invasive species impacting Marinette County, please refer to the County website (Marinette County home page → Departments → Land Information → Aquatic Invasive Species) or contact Robert Ruleau at 715-732-7642 or email [rruleau@marinettecounty.com](mailto:rruleau@marinettecounty.com).



## Area Farmers & Flea Markets



**Marinette Main Street Farmers Market.** June 8 – Oct. 29. Tuesday & Friday, 7am to noon or sell out (Saturdays optional). At Merchants Park, corner of Main & Wells Streets in Marinette. Call Denise at 715-732-5139.

**Downtown Menominee Farmers Market.** Timeless Treasures Antique Mall, 902 2<sup>nd</sup> St, Menominee MI. May 22 – October 9th. Saturday market from 9am-1pm, and Thursday market from 3-6pm. Call Lucy at 906-863-8718 for more info. Visit online at <http://www.culinate.com/market/MenomineeHistoryFM>.

**Crivitz Flea & Farmers Market.** May 27 – Sept. 2, 8am-4pm located at St. Mary's Parking lot across from the Crivitz Village Hall at 800 Henriette Avenue, Crivitz. Interested in participating contact Jean at 715-854-2030.

**Crivitz Farmers Market - Green Thumb Garden Shoppe.** July 10 – Sept. 25, Saturdays 9am-1pm. Corner County Hwy A and Mira Ave in Crivitz. Visit <http://crivitzfarmersmarket.com> for more info.

**Wausaukee Area Farmers Market & More** June 5 – October 2, 9am-2pm, first Saturday of the month. Located one block east of Main Street.

**Stephenson – Flea Markets at Erickson Park.** July 10, August 7, & September 4. Flea markets at Erickson Park, Stephenson, MI. Proceeds benefit the Stephenson High School athletic program.

## Northwoods Journal

Volume 8, Issue 4

The *Northwoods Journal* focuses on various outdoor recreation opportunities and local environmental topics to inform readers about natural resource use, management, and recreation in Marinette County.

Published in cooperation by:

- Marinette County Land & Water Conservation Division
- Marinette County Parks & Outdoor Recreation Department
- University of Wisconsin-Extension

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA. To ensure equal access, please make requests for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible prior to the scheduled program. If you need this material in another format, please contact the UW-Extension office at 715-732-7510.

Please send comments to:  
Marinette County Land & Water Conservation  
1926 Hall Ave, Marinette, WI 54143  
(715) 732-7780  
[awarren@marinettecounty.com](mailto:awarren@marinettecounty.com)



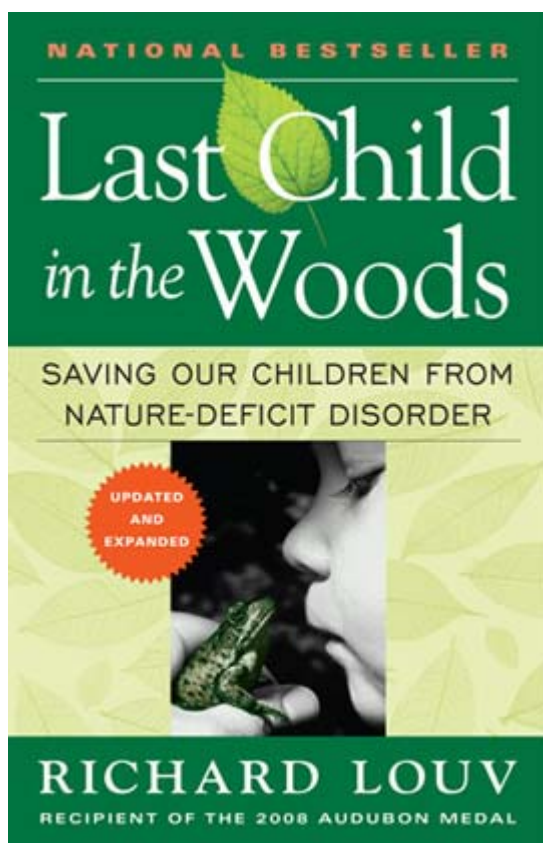


## Mother Nature: Raising healthier kids. Getting your kids back in touch with the great outdoors can improve their health and well-being.

Adapted from USA Today's *Weekend*, November 18, 2007 issue  
Source: <http://www.kahdalea.com/Nature%20&%20Kids/Nature&Kids.htm>

Recess, soccer practice, the neighborhood playground -- all are great avenues for getting our kids up and out. But when it comes to their mental as well as physical well-being, children need something else, something elemental: They need nature.

So says a new school of thought that is gaining notice by children's medical and mental health experts. Supporters assert that, for a child, a deep forest or sprawling parkland can be the best playground ever. Author Richard Louv's groundbreaking book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, has been a catalyst for kick-starting the movement. Louv's new book also gives a name to what he says is a troubling disconnect between today's children and the great outdoors: "nature-deficit disorder."



Blame it on shrinking green space, over-scheduling by families -- whatever the reason, the result is limiting the potential of today's young people, Louv says. He brings together anecdotal evidence gathered from years of traveling the United States and talking to kids, as well as the most comprehensive research on nature and its benefits. He concludes that the absence of nature in many children's lives is key when it comes to problems they increasingly face, such as obesity, attention disorders, depression and stress. Louv thinks that exposure to nature can help prevent these ills and enhance our children's academic and emotional growth.

- The Nature Conservancy found that kids under 13 now take part in freestyle play outdoors for only a half-hour a week.
- To get kids outside, parents have to overcome their fears. In one study, more than four out of five moms cited crime and safety concerns as key reasons to keep their kids indoors. Yet by 2002, violent crimes against young people had fallen well below 1975 levels.
- Unstructured play, indoors or out, lets children initiate activity, develops problem-solving skills, use their imagination and negotiate with peers. The outdoors provides a uniquely engaging environment for this

make a definitive statement about cause and effect, we do have a variety of studies that collectively point to an association between outdoor play and an array of good outcomes for kids," says Martha Erickson, Ph.D., a children's mental health expert and senior fellow and professor at the University of Minnesota.

- Nature can be a stress reducer. A 2003 study published in *Environment and Behavior* concluded that green plants and vistas reduce stress among children in rural areas. The more natural the surroundings, the better: A greater degree of "greenery" around the home was linked to more significant stress reduction.
- Nature can make kids more focused. University of Illinois research found that children with attention-deficit disorder can focus more effectively after outdoor activities such as camping and fishing. Other studies have yielded similar results: Urban kids have shown increased cognitive ability when they have access to natural settings, and Swedish preschoolers who played in more natural settings suffered fewer attention lapses -- being distracted, interrupting, not listening -- than those who played in less natural areas.
- Nature can enhance a child's emotional and social development. If young children have regular opportunities for unstructured play, then they are likely to have a greater chance of getting along with others and being happier, healthier and smarter, report researchers at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Teens also can benefit: A survey of participants in wilderness programs found that their interactions with nature resulted in enhanced self-esteem, independence and initiative.

Over the years, the hours that children spend playing outside can pay off when it comes to physical, intellectual and social development. Yet, such valuable interaction is fleeting these days. From 1997 to 2003, there was a 50% drop in kids who participated in outdoor activities such as hiking, walking and fishing, according to a University of Maryland study.

"Kids who play in natural areas -- those with bushes and trees -- have been shown to engage in more creative and cooperative play."--  
Richard Louv



Photo by Justin Bailie

Erickson and Louv, who both are active in the Children & Nature Network, which seeks to raise awareness about the importance of nature in kids' lives, say that even time-pressed families and city dwellers can find places that fit the bill. And lawmakers are listening, too. Some states, including Connecticut, California and Maine,

launched initiatives to get more young people outdoors. And on the federal level, the recently passed *No Child Left Inside Act* (2008) seeks to provide new funding for environmental education (see links below).



For more information about the Leave No Child Inside movement, resources, and ideas on how to get your child outdoors, please visit the following websites:

- <http://www.childrenandnature.org> -- the Children & Nature Network



- <http://richardlouv.com/> - Website of Richard Louv, author, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*
- <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/waee/> - WAEE, Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education
- <http://www.ncliwisconsin.org> - Wisconsin No Child Left Inside Coalition



- <http://www.cbf.org/Page.aspx?pid=687> -- Chesapeake Bay Foundation, No Child Left Inside
- <http://www.naaee.org/> - North American Association for Environmental Education
- <http://edlabor.house.gov/no-child-left-inside-act/index.shtml> - explains the No Child Left Inside Act (H.R. 3036), passed in November 2008, with related links to the legislation



Photo by Justin Bailie





## Area Events Calendar

- June-October Peshtigo Fire Museum Open.** Museum located on Oconto Avenue in Peshtigo will be open through October 8. Hours are 7 days a week from 10am-4pm. For more information call the museum at 715-582-3244.
- September 5 West Shore Fishing Museum Ice Cream Social.** Featuring brats and hot dogs, home made pie, ice cream and keg root beer. Music will be provided by the Tuinstras, raffle tickets for more than 75 prizes and games for kids. Located at Bailey Park, 15 miles north of Menominee on M-35.
- September 7 Tri-County Dog Training Academy fall classes begin.** 7pm at Marinette Armory, 2000 Mary Street, Marinette and program will last about one hour- no dogs. We encourage you to pre-register, as space is limited. 10 week sessions meet on Tuesday nights, puppy class at 6pm, beginners I at 7pm and beginners II at 8pm. Call 715-735-8232 or visit [www.tcdta.org](http://www.tcdta.org).
- September 10 Building Dreams Fundraiser.** River Cities Habitat for Humanity will be hosting an event at Menominee River Golf and Dining. Event will begin at 5:30pm and will include a silent and live auction along with other fun events. Funds raised are to refurbish two homes Habitat owns.
- September 11 Leap of Faith 5K run/walk.** Registration 7:45-8:45am, race 9am at Menominee Catholic Central School, 1406 10th Avenue, Menominee. \$17 per person or \$40 per family by Aug 27, \$20 per person or \$45 after. Contact Dan Paul at 863-3190 or [dpaul@mccspartans.org](mailto:dpaul@mccspartans.org).
- September 11 M&M Timberjacks vs. River City Rattlers,** 6pm, Spies Field. Vs. the Rattlers, a 2009 WSFL playoff qualifier come to town. Come root on the T-Jacks as they vie for a spot in the 2010 playoffs. \$4 adults, \$2 children 10-17 and children under 10 free.
- September 18 M&M Timberjacks vs. Kettle Moraine Titans,** 6pm Spies Field. The Timberjacks face the Titans on their home turf. \$4 adults, \$2 children 10-17 and children under 10 free.
- September 25 Gun Show at Crivitz Village Hall.** Sponsored by American Legion Post 413, Crivitz Village Hall. Show times 8:30am-3pm, admission \$3; kids under 12 are \$1. For reservations call Claire at 715-854-2676.
- September 25 Crivitz Harvest Fest Fall Craft Show, 9am-2pm.** Located at Crivitz High School, 400 South Ave., Crivitz. Over 50 exhibitors attend with a wide variety of homemade crafts. Admission is free, but bringing canned goods is encouraged. There is also a rummage sale and concessions are available.
- September 25 M&M Timberjacks vs. Sheboygan County Rebels,** 6pm Bulldog Stadium in Peshtigo. The T-Jacks wrap up their regular season home schedule as a part of the Peshtigo Historical Day celebration in a game vs. their old nemesis, the Rebels. \$4 adults, \$2 children 10-17 and children under 10 free.
- September 25 Peshtigo Historical Day at Badger Park.** Firetower Walk/Run 8am, registration 6:30-7:45am. Parade at 10:30am. Events include Bed Races at 2pm, horseshoe tournament, live music from 11:30am to 10pm, craft booths, food, balloon jumping equipment, games, M&M Timberjacks semi-pro football game, fireworks at dusk. Sponsored by Peshtigo Chamber of Commerce. Call 715-582-0327 or visit [www.peshtigochamber.com](http://www.peshtigochamber.com) for more information.

### Update - Children's Learning Garden at Harmony Arboretum

This spring and summer we made wonderful progress on the Children's Learning Garden! We installed many of the main elements and we will continue working on the CLG into the fall, and resume work next spring. Thank you so much to everyone who volunteered their time and efforts, as well as to the generous donors who helped make this project possible! Without all of your support and efforts, the CLG would still be just an idea instead of a reality. It will be completed in 2011.

Below are some photos of the progress that has been made at the CLG this year. At left: late April, when nothing was there; at right, mid-July, showing the wetlands, part of the sundial, and the Native American garden. The bottom photo, from late August, shows the Pioneer garden planters in the foreground, with the Native American garden and pavilion in the background.



Marinette County  
**Harmony Arboretum**

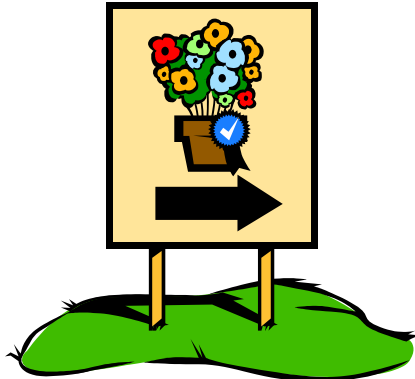
½ mile south of Hwy 64, on County E

**Extension** : 715-732-7510  
Land Information Office: 715-732-7780  
<http://www.marinettecounty.com>

### Upcoming Events

**September 9 – Salsa Night, 6-8 pm** – Back by popular demand! Check out how to grow the fresh garden ingredients you need to make salsa; learn safe salsa preservation; then taste and take home some different recipes for this healthy snack. See page 2 for more information.

**September 11 – Fall Plant Sale, 9 am-noon** – Northern Lights Master Gardeners fall plant sale. Funds raised all go towards educational programming. Bring your pest samples and plant raising questions to ask a Master Gardeners or UWEX staff.



**October 2 – Long Term Produce Storage, 10:30 am-noon** – In-ground, in-garden, or in-house storage options can be utilized to store certain types of vegetables for weeks or even months. Learn tips & techniques that allow you to maximize produce quality at minimal cost. Instructor: Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Horticulture Agent.

**October 14 – Astronomy at the Arboretum, 7-8:30 pm** – Spend an evening under the stars! Learn about stars, constellations, mythology, and make your own star chart to take home. Dress for the weather, hot beverages will be provided. See page 4 for more information.



Harmony Arboretum & Demonstration Gardens is located seven miles west of Marinette off of Highway 64, then ½ mile south on County E. **All programs are free unless otherwise stated.** For more information, call UWEX at 715-732-7510 or UWCD at 715-732-7780